

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION

FOR

**GAMING DEVICE HAVING ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA FOR
ADVANCEMENT**

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**GAMING DEVICE HAVING ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA FOR
ADVANCEMENT**

CROSS REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Sub. a1> This application is related to the following co-pending commonly
owned patent applications: "Gaming Device Having Termination
Variables," Serial No. _____, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-578;
"Gaming Device Having Improved Award Offer Bonus Scheme," Serial
No. 09/682,368, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-586; and "Gaming
10 Device Having an Offer and Acceptance Selection Bonus Scheme With
a Terminator and an Anti-Terminator," Serial No. _____, Attorney
Docket No. 0112300-719.

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DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates in general to a gaming device, and more particularly to a gaming device having achievement criteria, wherein the player advances if the player meets the criteria, and the
5 game ends if the player does not meet the criteria.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Known gaming machines randomly generate outcomes for a player and have varying levels of player interaction. Wagering gaming
10 machines exist having no player interaction and only a random generation. PCT application number PCT/AU97/00121 entitled, "Slot Machine Game with Roaming Wild Card," discloses a slot machine having a video display containing a plurality of rotatable reels with game symbols. When the player receives a triggering symbol or
15 symbol combination, the game produces a bonus symbol. The bonus symbol moves from game symbol to game symbol temporarily changing the game symbol to a bonus symbol. If the change results in a winning combination, the player receives an award.

Known gaming machines also have a random generation and a
20 player selection. For instance, one known gaming machine provides a player one or more opportunities to select masked bonus awards from a group of masked awards displayed to the player. When the player selects a masked award, the player receives the value of the award, the game displays a message that the player may continue and
25 enables the player to select another masked award. The player selects

another masked award, and the sequence continues until the player selects a masked terminator. European Patent Application No. EP 0 945 837 A2 discloses such a game.

Known gaming machines have a plurality of random
5 generations, a player selection and a player decision. For instance, one game allows players to accept or decline multiple award offers. The TOP DOLLAR® gaming device, which is manufactured and distributed by the assignee of this application, provides the player with three offers and a final award. When an offer is given, the player may
10 accept or reject it by pushing an accept button or a reject button, respectively. If the player accepts an offer, the player receives the accepted bonus amount and the bonus round terminates. If the player declines an offer, the game generates another offer for the player. The final award is automatically provided to the player.

15 In each of these games, the random selections do not accumulate; rather, they are evaluated independently. That is, the roaming wildcard game has only one random generation, wherein the game randomly generates a plurality of symbols, which determine whether the roaming wildcard produces winning combinations. In the
20 select until game, the player's picks are evaluated individually, whereby a single uncovered game terminator ends the game. In the offer acceptance game, the player evaluates the outcome of a single random generation to determine whether to keep the outcome or risk a swap.

25

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention includes a gaming device which displays a plurality of choices or selections to a player, whereby each choice generates or provides an associated number of points. In one
5 embodiment, the points equal awards that the game provides to the player. The game provides an initial number of picks to the player. The game also maintains a regeneration amount, whereby the player receives a new number of picks if the points or awards associated with the player's choices or picks accumulate at least to the regeneration
10 amount, within the initial number of picks.

The gaming device of the present invention also includes a plurality of point tables which include the points that the processor associates with the choices or picks. The processor of the gaming device accumulates the total points, which is the sum of all points
15 associated with the player's choices or picks.

The processor also maintains a goal amount of points. The game provides an award to the player when the player achieves the goal or goal amount. This award is in addition to awards achieved when the player generates points (in the embodiment where the points
20 equal awards).

The game preferably selects and uses a point table from a plurality of point tables, wherein the selected point table is associated with a percentage of the goal achieved. The percentage is the player's total points divided by the goal amount of points. That is, as the player
25 accumulates points, the percentage of the goal amount increases. The

processor then chooses a point table from the plurality of point tables based on the current percentage. The game maintains certain percent ranges, such as 0-15%, 16-30%, etc., whereby the game maintains a different point table for each range. The present invention further
5 includes a plurality of point tables for each range, wherein the game randomly chooses one of the tables when the player accumulates enough points to enter a range.

The present invention includes a preferred method for operating the gaming device. In this method, the game displays a plurality of
10 choices and provides a number of picks to a player. The game prompts the player to pick a choice and, upon a pick, sends a corresponding input to the processor. The game provides an associated number of points to the player and adds the points to any previously accumulated points, to form a total number of points. The
15 game adds the pick to any previously accumulated picks to form a total number of picks.

The game determines if the total number of points is equal or greater than a regeneration amount and if the total picks equals the number of provided picks. The game provides a new number or set of
20 picks if the total number of points is equal to or greater than the regeneration amount. The game prompts the player to pick a new choice if the total number of picks is less than the number of provided picks and the total number of points is less than the regeneration amount. The game ends if the total number of picks equals the

number of provided picks and the total number of points is less than the regeneration amount.

The present invention includes an alternative method associated with the operation of the gaming device. In this method, the game displays a plurality of choices on a display device. The processor maintains a plurality of point tables, wherein the point tables include points associated with the choices or picks. The processor accumulates a total number of points via the player's picks. The processor maintains a goal amount and assigns a point table to each choice or pick based on a percentage, wherein the percentage equals the total number of points divided by the goal amount. The processor prompts the player to make a choice and upon receiving an input, provides points from the assigned point table. The points preferably equal awards for the player.

It is therefore an advantage of the present invention to provide a gaming device having a number of picks and a regeneration amount, wherein the game regenerates the number of picks if the player accumulates the regeneration amount of points within the initially provided number of picks.

Another advantage of the present invention is that the gaming device maintains a goal amount and accumulates a player's points, whereby the accumulated points divided by the goal amount form a percentage, and whereby the game selects a point table based on the current percentage.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed disclosure, taken in conjunction with the accompanying sheets of drawings, wherein like numerals refer to like parts, elements, components, steps and processes.

5

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1A is a front-side perspective view of one embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 1B is a front-side perspective view of another embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of one embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a front elevational view of one of the display devices of Figs. 1A and 1B illustrating one embodiment of the present invention.

Figs. 4A through 4F are schematic views of point or award pools of one embodiment of the present invention, which include points or awards that the game assigns to the game's choices or the player's picks.

Figs. 5A through 5F are schematic views of the point or award pools of Figs. 4A through 4F, which additionally include a consolation award and an associated likelihood of obtaining the consolation award.

Figs. 6A through 6H are schematic views of stage tables, which include points or awards that the game assigns to the game's choices or player's picks.

Fig. 7 is a schematic view of an alternative stage table that illustrates a plurality of stages and success percentage associated with each stage, wherein the success percentage is the likelihood that the game generates an advance versus a no advance outcome.

5 Fig. 8 is a graphical display of one example of one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Gaming Device and Electronics

10 Referring now to the drawings, two embodiments of the gaming device of the present invention are illustrated in Figs. 1A and 1B as gaming device 10a and gaming device 10b, respectively. Gaming device 10a and/or gaming device 10b are generally referred to herein as gaming device 10. Gaming device 10 is preferably a slot machine
15 having the controls, displays and features of a conventional slot machine. It is constructed so that a player can operate it while standing or sitting, and gaming device 10 is preferably mounted on a console. However, it should be appreciated that gaming device 10 can be constructed as a pub-style table-top game (not shown) which a
20 player can operate preferably while sitting. Furthermore, gaming device 10 can be constructed with varying cabinet and display designs, as illustrated by the designs shown in Figs. 1A and 1B. Gaming device 10 can also be implemented as a program code stored in a detachable cartridge for operating a hand-held video game device. Also, gaming
25 device 10 can be implemented as a program code stored on a disk or

other memory device which a player can use in a desktop or laptop personal computer or other computerized platform.

Gaming device 10 can incorporate any primary game such as slot, poker or keno, any of their bonus triggering events and any of their
5 bonus round games. The symbols and indicia used on and in gaming device 10 may be in mechanical, electrical or video form.

As illustrated in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 includes a coin slot 12 and bill acceptor 14 where the player inserts money, coins or tokens. The player can place coins in the coin slot 12 or paper
10 money or a ticket voucher in the bill acceptor 14. Other devices could be used for accepting payment such as readers or validators for credit cards or debit cards. When a player inserts money in gaming device 10, a number of credits corresponding to the amount deposited is shown in a credit display 16. After depositing the appropriate amount
15 of money, a player can begin the game by pulling arm 18 or pushing play button 20. Play button 20 can be any play activator used by the player, which starts any game or sequence of events in the gaming device.

As shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 also includes a
20 bet display 22 and a bet one button 24. The player places a bet by pushing the bet one button 24. The player can increase the bet by one credit each time the player pushes the bet one button 24. When the player pushes the bet one button 24, the number of credits shown in the credit display 16 decreases by one, and the number of credits
25 shown in the bet display 22 increases by one.

At any time during the game, a player may "cash out" and thereby receive a number of coins corresponding to the number of remaining credits by pushing a cash out button 26. When the player "cashes out," the player receives the coins in a coin payout tray 28.

- 5 The gaming device 10 may employ other payout mechanisms such as credit vouchers redeemable by a cashier or electronically recordable cards, which keep track of the player's credits.

Gaming device 10 also includes one or more display devices. The embodiment shown in Fig. 1A includes a central display device 30, and the alternative embodiment shown in Fig. 1B includes a central display device 30 as well as an upper display device 32. Gaming device 10 preferably displays a plurality of reels 34, preferably three to five reels 34 in mechanical or video form at one or more of the display devices. However, it should be appreciated that the display devices can display any visual representation or exhibition, including but not limited to movement of physical objects such as mechanical reels and wheels, dynamic lighting and video images. A display device can be any viewing surface such as glass, a video monitor or screen, a liquid crystal display or any other static or dynamic display mechanism. If the reels 34 are in video form, the display device for the video reels 34 is preferably a video monitor.

Each reel 34 displays a plurality of indicia such as bells, hearts, fruits, numbers, letters, bars or other images which preferably correspond to a theme associated with the gaming device 10.

Furthermore, gaming device 10 preferably includes speakers 36 for making sounds or playing music.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the general electronic configuration of gaming device 10 preferably includes: a processor 38; a memory device 40 for storing program code or other data; a central display device 30; an upper display device 32; a sound card 42; a plurality of speakers 36; and one or more input devices 44. The processor 38 is preferably a microprocessor or microcontroller-based platform which is capable of displaying images, symbols and other indicia such as images of people, characters, places, things and faces of cards. The memory device 40 can include random access memory (RAM) 46 for storing event data or other data generated or used during a particular game. The memory device 40 can also include read only memory (ROM) 48 for storing program code which controls the gaming device 10 so that it plays a particular game in accordance with applicable game rules and pay tables.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the player preferably uses the input devices 44, such as pull arm 18, play button 20, the bet one button 24 and the cash out button 26 to input signals into gaming device 10. In certain instances it is preferable to use a touch screen 50 and an associated touch screen controller 52 instead of a conventional video monitor display device. Touch screen 50 and touch screen controller 52 are connected to a video controller 54 and processor 38. A player can make decisions and input signals into the gaming device 10 by touching touch screen 50 at the appropriate places. As further

illustrated in Fig. 2, the processor 38 can be connected to coin slot 12 or bill acceptor 14. The processor 38 can be programmed to require a player to deposit a certain amount of money in order to start the game.

It should be appreciated that although a processor 38 and
5 memory device 40 are preferable implementations of the present invention, the present invention can also be implemented using one or more application-specific integrated circuits (ASIC's) or other hard-wired devices, or using mechanical devices (collectively referred to herein as a "processor"). Furthermore, although the processor 38 and
10 memory device 40 preferably reside on each gaming device 10 unit, it is possible to provide some or all of their functions at a central location such as a network server for communication to a playing station such as over a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), Internet connection, microwave link, and the like. The processor 38 and
15 memory device 40 is generally referred to herein as the "computer" or the "controller."

With reference to Figs. 1A, 1B and 2, to operate the gaming device 10 in one embodiment the player must insert the appropriate amount of money or tokens at coin slot 12 or bill acceptor 14 and then
20 pull the arm 18 or push the play button 20. The reels 34 will then begin to spin. Eventually, the reels 34 will come to a stop. As long as the player has credits remaining, the player can spin the reels 34 again. Depending upon where the reels 34 stop, the player may or may not win additional credits.

In addition to winning credits in this manner, preferably gaming device 10 also gives players the opportunity to win credits in a bonus round. This type of gaming device 10 will include a program which will automatically begin a bonus round when the player has achieved a
5 qualifying condition in the game. This qualifying condition can be a particular arrangement of indicia on a display device. The gaming device 10 preferably uses a video-based central display device 30 to enable the player to play the bonus round. Preferably, the qualifying condition is a predetermined combination of indicia appearing on a
10 plurality of reels 34. As illustrated in the five reel slot game shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, the qualifying condition could be the number seven appearing on three adjacent reels 34 along a payline 56. It should be appreciated that the present invention can include one or more paylines, such as payline 56, wherein the paylines can be horizontal,
15 diagonal or any combination thereof.

Choices and Databases

Referring now to Fig. 3, the display 100 of the gaming machine includes a plurality of player selectable choices 102, 104, 106, 108,
20 110, 112, 114 and 116. The display 100 includes eight choices, however, the present invention contemplates any suitable number of choices. The choices 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114 and 116 are preferably areas of a touch screen 50 such that when the game enables an input to be made to the processor 38 of Fig. 2, a player
25 may touch and pick any of the choices and thereby send a discrete

input to the processor 38. The game does not always enable the inputs, so that when the input is not enabled and the player touches a choice, the game does not send an input. The game enables the input at the appropriate time of a sequence, as described below.

5 The choices 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114 and 116 preferably include suitable indicia, here the letters "A" through "H," respectively, which designate one choice from another. The choices and their accompanying indicia may alternatively be electromechanical input devices mounted to the gaming device 10, similar to the play
10 button 20, the bet one button 24 and the cash out button 26 illustrated in Figs. 1A and 1B. The choices in electromechanical form display their identifying indicia in any suitable manner, such as including a light source behind the devices.

 The display 100 preferably includes a total points indicator 118,
15 a picks remaining indicator 120, a regeneration amount indicator 122, a regeneration total indicator 124 and a goal amount indicator 126. The indicators 118, 120 and 124 are preferably areas of a video monitor display device 30 or 32 adapted such that when the processor 38 (Fig. 2) updates the player's points or receives an input from a pick, the
20 indicators convert and display an updated signal from the processor.

 More specifically, the total points indicator 118 receives updated point or award signals, translates the signals and displays the player's total updated points or awards as the player picks choices and accumulates their associated points or awards.

The picks remaining indicator 120 receives updated award signals, translates the signals and displays the player's remaining picks as the player picks choices. As discussed below, the game provides a number or set of picks to the player, such as four picks. As the player
5 makes the picks, the processor preferably counts backward from the original number or forward from zero, and the picks remaining indicator 120 displays this count.

The regeneration amount indicator 122 and the goal amount indicator 126 are preferably static displays in a single game of the
10 present invention. The present invention contemplates providing a new set of picks or resetting the number of picks if the player accumulates a predetermined amount of points or awards within the number or set of provided picks. The regeneration amount indicator 122 displays the number of points or awards necessary to generate a new set of picks
15 or reset the number of picks.

The regeneration amount preferably does not change in a game of the present invention, although the present invention includes different regeneration amounts in different games. In one example, the regeneration amount is initially set to ten points or awards and stays
20 the same throughout the game. Alternatively, the regeneration amount varies throughout the course of the game. In an example wherein the amount varies, the regeneration amount is initially set to ten points or awards and, at a later point in the game, changes to twenty points or awards. The regeneration amount indicator 122 displays the current

regeneration amount and accordingly updates and displays any change.

The regeneration total indicator 124 receives updated award signals, translates the signals and displays the player's regeneration points or awards as the player picks choices and accumulates their associated points or awards. The player's regeneration total is the amount of points or awards that the player has received since the game provided a new set of picks. If the player's regeneration total displayed by indicator 124 meets or exceeds the regeneration amount 122, within the number or set of provided picks, the player receives a new set of picks, and the game resets the regeneration total of the indicator 124 to zero. Accordingly, if the player successfully reaches the goal amount, the game can provide the player with an additional bonus game, where the player can accommodate additional bonus awards.

The present invention contemplates providing a goal award after a player achieves an amount of points or awards equal to a goal amount. The goal award includes any award desired by the implementor, such as a number of game credits, game credit modifiers such as multipliers or a number of picks from a prize pool. The goal amount indicator 126 displays the goal amount. The goal amount preferably does not change in a game of the present invention, although the present invention includes different goal amounts in different games. In an example, the goal amount is initially set to one hundred points or awards and stays the same throughout the game.

In an alternative embodiment, gaming device 10 repeats the game after the player achieves an amount of points or awards equal to the goal amount. In the repeated game, the gaming device, in one embodiment, provides higher average awards and also makes it more difficult for the player's regeneration total to reach the regeneration amount 122 within the number of picks provided. In this embodiment, therefore, gaming device 10 may be adapted to issue, for example, two or more awards for every point that the player accumulates.

Alternatively, the goal amount varies throughout the course of the game. In one example, the goal amount is initially set to one hundred points or awards and changes to one hundred twenty if the player's regeneration total equals the regeneration amount one or more times. In another example, the goal amount is initially set to one hundred points or awards, the player achieves the goal amount and the goal award and the game starts over, wherein the goal amount is now two hundred points or awards. It should also be appreciated that the game can restart with the same goal amount as the first game. Accordingly, if the player is successful by reaching the goal amount, the game can provide the player with an additional bonus game where the player can accumulate additional bonus awards. The goal amount indicator 126 displays the goal amount and accordingly updates and displays any change.

The indicators 118, 120, 122, 124 and 126 may alternatively be electromechanical display devices mounted to the gaming device 10. Such electromechanical indicators are electrically connected to the

processor 38 (See Fig. 2) such that they receive signals from the processor, display their identifying indicia in any suitable manner, translate the signals from the processor and display the appropriate amount.

5 Further alternatively, the regeneration amount indicator 122 and the goal amount indicator 126 include any implicit or explicit, static or dynamic displays that communicate the regeneration amount and goal amount, respectively. For example, one embodiment of the present invention is implemented in a football theme, wherein the regeneration
10 amount indicator 122 is a message on the display device stating "GET A FIRST DOWN AND WIN FOUR MORE PICKS" as illustrated in Fig. 8. A player familiar with football knows that ten yards yields a first down and therefore knows or soon discovers that the regeneration amount is ten points or awards. In the same football example, the goal
15 amount indicator 126 may message on the display device stating, in effect, "Score a touchdown and win a touchdown award." A player familiar with football knows that starting from a known yard-line, a touchdown requires one hundred points or awards less the player's current position on the field. A player starting on the twenty yard line
20 therefore knows that the goal amount is eighty points or awards. In this implementation, the player accumulates awards as the player travels down the field, the points equal awards and the player wins the goal award if the player obtains a touchdown. If points do not equal awards, the player only wins the goal award. It should also be appreciated that
25 awards could be provided to the player for achieving the regeneration

amounts and that consolation awards could be provided to the player for not achieving the regeneration amount after the player uses all of the player's picks.

Referring now to Figs. 4A through 4F, point or award pools 126,
5 128, 130, 132, 134 and 136 include awards that the game assigns to the choices of Fig. 3. In an embodiment where points equal awards provided to the player, the awards of the present invention include any item or number that translates into a pecuniary gain for the player. The awards, including the goal award, include gaming device credits and
10 modifiers such as multipliers, wherein the multipliers multiply a tally of gaming device credits, such as the amount of a player's total bet, bet per payline, total win, win per payline or win from a bonus round game. The awards also include other types, such as a number of picks from a prize pool, wherein the prize pool includes, for example, gaming device
15 credits.

The point or award pools 126, 128, 130, 132, 134 and 136 each include eight point totals or awards 140, wherein the game preferably randomly assigns each point total or award to one of the choices 102 through 116 (Fig. 3). The award pools alternatively include more point
20 totals or awards 140 than choices, whereby the game does not assign one or more of the point totals or awards. The point or award pools further alternatively include less point totals or awards 140 than choices, whereby the game assigns one or more of the point totals or awards a plurality of times. The point or award pools still further
25 alternatively include different amounts of point totals or awards such as

one award pool having less point totals or awards than choices, one award pool having the same number and one award pool having more point totals or awards than choices.

5 The point or award pools 126 through 136 each include a percent range 142. The percent ranges 142 include percentages that correspond to the player's total accumulated points or awards, as indicated by the total point indicator 118, divided by the goal amount, as indicated by the goal amount indicator 126. In one embodiment, after the player's previous selection and before the game enables a
10 further pick, the game determines the percentage, as described above, and selects the database having the percent range 142 that includes the determined percentage.

In one example of this embodiment, if the player's total points or awards after a previous selection is 40, as indicated by the total points
15 indicator 118, and the goal award is 80, as indicated by the goal award indicator 126, the game determines the percentage to be 50%. The game selects the point or award pool 132 of Fig. 4D because its percent range 142 is 45% to 60% and therefore includes the determined percentage (i.e., 50%). The player's next pick therefore
20 yields one of the point tables or awards from the award pool 132.

It should be appreciated that in an embodiment in which the number of point or award pools is equal to or less than the number of choices, each point or award pool may include a different percent range 142. In an embodiment in which the number of point or award
25 pools is greater than the number of choices, one or more point or

award pools may have overlapping percent ranges 142. Where two point or award pools include the same determined percentage, the game preferably randomly selects one of the point or award pools.

In this embodiment, the game randomly assigns the point tables
5 or awards 140 of the appropriate point or award pool to the choices
and masks the assignments from the player. In one embodiment, the
game randomly assigns each point total or award 140 to a choice and
maintains the assignment. For example, if the player has a total award
of 40 and a goal amount percentage of 50%, the game employs the
10 database 132. The game randomly assigns, for example: the 20 to the
"B" choice 104; the -4 to the "D" choice 108; the 5 to the "F" choice
112; the 3 to the "E" choice 110; the 1 to the "A" choice 102; the 0 to
the "H" choice 116; the -2 to the "G" choice 114 and the 2 to the "C"
choice 106.

15 In this embodiment, the game only enables the player to select
each choice once. The player selects the "A" and obtains the 1 point
award. The player's total points or awards is now 41, and the goal
amount percentage is still within the range of database 132. If the
player has picks remaining, the game employs the same database 132
20 and preferably the same random generation as above, whereby the "A"
is no longer selectable. The player selects the "G" and obtains -2
points or awards. The player's total points or awards is now 39, and
the goal amount percentage is still within the range of database 132. If
the player has picks remaining, this embodiment of the game employs
25 the same database 132 and the same random generation as above,

whereby the "A" and "G" are no longer selectable. Assigning each choice a point total or award 140 is preferred because when the player runs out of picks, the game preferably reveals the points or awards of the unselected choices and shows the player the picks that would have
5 enabled the player to advance or obtain a goal award.

In an alternative embodiment, the same pool or database can be employed until the player uses all of the players picks before obtaining the regeneration amount or the player reaches the regeneration amount. For example, if the goal amount is 100, the regeneration
10 amount is initially 35, the initial regeneration total is 25 and the player has four picks, the game will assign the points or awards from a single pool such as pool 128 (Fig. 4B) to the selections 102 to 116. If the player picks selection 104 or "B," and 7 points are associated with that selection, the regeneration total will be 32. Since the regeneration total
15 does not equal the regeneration amount, the player picks another selection. The possible points or awards associated with the selections are still taken from pool 128 or remain as associated before the player's first pick because even though the percentage is now greater than 30 (i.e., 32%), the regeneration amount was not achieved and the
20 player still has picks remaining.

In another alternative embodiment, the game randomly selects the points or awards that the player receives either up front or as the player picks choices. For example, a game employing the point or award pool 126 of Fig. 4A either randomly generates that the player
25 receives "two" points or awards first, "one" point or award second, "six"

points or awards third, etc., before the player makes any picks. Or, the player picks a first time and the game randomly generates "two" points or awards, the player picks a second time and the game randomly generates "one" point or award, the player picks a third time and the game randomly generates "six" points or awards, etc. In both cases, the choice the player picks is irrelevant to the result, i.e., picking any choice "A" through "H" yields the same result. This embodiment enables the generation of the same points or awards two or more times. This embodiment also enables the player to pick the same choice as many times as the player desires.

If the player exhausts the provided picks without generating a regeneration amount of points or awards, the game ends. That is, if the picks remaining indicator reaches zero before the regeneration total of the indicator 124 meets or exceeds the regeneration amount 122, the game ends. If the player generates the regeneration amount 122 before exhausting the provided picks, the player obtains a new or regenerated set of picks and the game accordingly resets the picks remaining indicator 120 and resets the regeneration total of the indicator 124.

In the embodiment described above, the game concurrently evaluates the player's total points or awards, as described above, to determine a goal amount percentage and the appropriate point or award pool. The dual evaluations create one scenario, in which the player achieves the regeneration amount and thus a new set of picks, but does not enter a new percent range 142. In this scenario, the

award pools 146, 148, 150, 152, 154 and 156, respectively, which are the pools 126 through 136 of Fig. 4 plus an associated consolation award 144 and an associated success percentage 158.

5 The consolation awards 144 include any amount desired by the implementor, are preferably different from one database to the next as illustrated, but alternatively may be the same for each database. The success percentages 158 which indicate a likelihood of obtaining the consolation award include any percentage desired by the implementor and are preferably different from one database to the next, but
10 alternatively may be the same for each database. In Figs. 5A through 5F, the consolation awards decrease as the percent ranges 142 increase. The success percentages 158 increase as the percent ranges 142 increase. In essence, the earlier in the game that the player attempts a consolation award 144, the less the success
15 probability but the higher the consolation award. The present invention alternatively includes any value and success distribution desired by the game implementor.

Referring again to Fig. 3, a consolation choice 160, similar in form and structure to the choices 102 to 116, enables a player to stop
20 an attempt to accumulate a regeneration amount and try for a consolation award. An astute player tries to accumulate awards until only one pick remains, as indicated in the picks remaining indicator 120. If on the last pick, it appears unlikely that the player will generate the regeneration amount (i.e., if the player needs a relatively large
25 number of points or awards to reach the regeneration amount), the

player may forego the opportunity to continue the game and opt for a higher value consolation award.

In the football game implementation described above, the consolation award is analogous to a field goal attempt. On fourth
5 down, i.e., with one chance or pick remaining, the game enables the player to select a suitable field goal selection which is the consolation choice 160, which if successful yields a higher consolation value than attempting a fourth down play and not receiving a first down. A player familiar with football knows or soon learns that selecting the
10 consolation choice 160 ends the game of the present invention.

It should be appreciated that the present invention preferably enables the player to select the consolation choice 160 and generate a consolation outcome with any number of picks remaining. It should also be appreciated that alternatively, the game may offer the attempt
15 at a consolation award after the player has used all of the player's picks. It should further be appreciated that the game could change the number of picks when the player has achieved a certain percentage (described above). For example, the game may change the picks from four picks to three picks plus a consolation attempt.

20

Multiple Stage Embodiment

In the above embodiments, the game enables the player to achieve a point or award total that invokes a new percent range 142 while not achieving the regeneration amount and vice versa. Referring
25 to Figs. 6A through 6H, the present invention alternatively includes

structuring the game to include a preset number of stages having corresponding tables 170, wherein each stage requires the player to achieve the regeneration amount of points or awards in order to advance to the next stage. Each table 170 includes point totals or awards 140 described above in connection with Figs. 4A through 4F and Figs. 5A through 5F. As above, the point totals or awards 140 are values that enable the player to advance to the next stage and corresponding table 170 but do not represent awards. Alternatively, the point total or awards 140 are values that enable the player to advance to the next stage and additionally represent awards.

In the embodiment of Figs. 6A through 6H, the game preferably requires the player to advance through all the stages, e.g., eight stages, before awarding the player the goal award. That is, the game does not require a total amount of points or awards to win the goal award; rather, the player must advance through each stage. For each stage, the player must accumulate a regeneration total of points or awards from the stage's table 170 that meets or exceeds the preset regeneration amount within a defined set of picks to advance to the next stage.

In the tables 170 of Figs. 6A through 6H, the point totals or awards 140 are chosen such that the player has an increasingly difficult time accumulating a regeneration amount in a provided number of picks. In this configuration, the player has an increasingly difficult time accumulating ten points or awards with four picks, which are the same parameters disclosed above. Also as above, the game randomly

associates or assigns the point totals or awards 140 of the tables 170 to the choices 102 though 116 (Fig. 3) and maintains the association throughout the game play of the stage. The game alternatively randomly associates or assigns the point total or awards 140 of the tables 170 to the order in which the player picks choices, i.e., to pick one, pick two, etc.

Referring to Fig. 7, an alternative table 180 including the eight stages of Figs. 6A through 6H illustrates an alternative method for enabling the player to play the stage by stage embodiment of the present invention. Each stage has an associated success percentage 182, whereby the game generates an advance or a no advance for each stage. The success percentages 182 are preferably high for earlier stages and steadily decrease as the player advances through the stages. Once the game generates an advance or a no advance, the game generates point totals or awards 140 from one or more tables 170 that cumulatively illustrate an advance or no advance outcome to the player. This method enables the game to present exciting scenarios, for example, a zero award, followed by another zero, followed further by a ten award to illustrate an advance outcome.

The embodiment of Figs. 6A through 6H and Fig. 7 includes awarding the player in a plurality of ways. The game includes only providing a goal award to the player who advances through each of the eight stages. The game includes providing an advancement award to the player each time the player advances through a stage. The advancement award includes being predetermined or being the

number of awards 140 accumulated from the table 170 during the play of the stage. The game further includes providing a predetermined advancement award in addition to providing the number of awards 140 accumulated from the table 170 during the play of the stage.

- 5 Regardless of the award alternative employed, the game preferably provides the goal award after advancing through all the stages.

The alternative embodiment also contemplates providing the consolation award 144 (Figs. 5A through 5F) at any time by picking the consolation selector or choice 160 (Fig. 3). As disclosed in connection
10 with Figs. 5A through 5F, the alternative embodiment of Figs. 6A through 6H includes decreasing, increasing or maintaining the consolation awards in later stages. The alternative embodiment also includes providing success percentages 158 that increase or decrease in later stages. Preferably as above, the earlier in the game that the
15 player attempts a consolation award 144, the less the success probability but the higher the consolation award.

While the present invention is described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it should be appreciated that the invention is not limited
20 to the disclosed embodiments, and is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the claims. Modifications and variations in the present invention may be made without departing from the novel aspects of the invention as defined in the claims, and this application is limited only by
25 the scope of the claims.